

(c) REMARKS

The claims are 16 and 19, with claim 16 being independent. Claim 16 has been amended to include the features of claim 18, which has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claim 19 has been added. Support for the new claim may be found, for example, in the specification at page 29, lines 5-9, and in the Examples. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration or consideration, as the case may be, of the claims is requested.

Claim 16 was rejected as obvious over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0180854 A1 (Sato) in view of JP Application No. 2003-345828 (Nakazawa) and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0122889 A1 (Okuda). Claim 18 was rejected as obvious over Sato in view of Nakazawa, Okuda, and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0027037 A1 (Suda). The grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed.

Prior to addressing the grounds of rejection, Applicants wish to briefly review certain features and advantages of the present claimed invention. That invention, in pertinent part, is related to a process for producing a three-dimensional pattern as set forth in claim 16. In this process, a three-dimensional basic pattern is first formed by applying a thermal stimulus to a liquid composition that has been applied to a recording medium, and then an electromagnetic wave stimulus is imparted thereto to form a pattern. Thereafter, a second liquid composition, which has a different color than the previously applied liquid composition, is applied onto the pattern. Furthermore, the liquid compositions having

different colors are a water-based liquid composition and an oil-based liquid composition. Thus, when applying a liquid composition having a different color, bleeding, which normally takes place between liquid compositions having different colors, can be suppressed.

Sato discloses a block polymer that has a polyalkenyl ether or a polyoxyalkylene as the repeating unit structure. Nakazawa discloses a block polymer compound containing block segments. Okuda discloses ejecting liquid droplets to a substrate (recording medium) to form a fine pattern. Okuda also discloses that the liquid droplets contain a UV curable resin, which is cured on the substrate, and discloses that inks of four colors are applied such that the dots overlap with each other.

As acknowledged in the Office Action, neither Sato, Nakazawa, nor Okada discloses that the liquid compositions having different colors are a water-based liquid composition and an oil-based liquid composition. However, the Examiner has alleged that Suda discloses the use of water and oil-based compositions as a means for increasing viscosity, referring to paragraph [0173]. The Examiner also alleged that it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art to have used a water-based liquid composition for one color and an oil-based liquid composition for the other color. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that Suda does not disclose the use of water and oil-based compositions as a means for increasing viscosity. In paragraph [0173], Suda merely discloses that an oil-soluble coloring material is contained in a

water-based ink, and then hydrogen ions or metal cations are brought into contact with the water-based ink to thereby increase the viscosity via aggregation of micelle particles formed by block polymer compounds. This is different from the present claimed invention in which a water-based liquid composition and an oil-based liquid composition are applied one by one on a recording medium.

Suda does not at all teach or suggest that plural kinds of liquid compositions, each comprising a block polymer having a polyalkenyl ether repeating unit structure and a liquid medium, are prepared, and that the initially applied liquid composition and the subsequently applied liquid composition are a water-based liquid composition and an oil-based liquid composition. The oil-soluble coloring material of Suda is solid content in the water-based ink. This is clearly different from the oil-based liquid composition of the present invention. Moreover, Suda does not disclose or suggest that the hydrogen ions or metal cations used for thickening the water-based ink are contained in an oil-based liquid composition.

For the foregoing reasons, the present invention is not rendered obvious over the cited references, alone or combined.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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